CONVICTS ON PAY ROLL.

ing Men in Prison Costly, Work- ing Them Aids When Free.

(By HARRY F. DUNN.)

tting men iin prison is costly bus- ; keeping them there is still mor ; nsive. Some students of crimnol- economics and history have de- d that from no point of view it pay society to confine its gdoers. Men in charge of state ces have discovered that it costs e average, $1,000 to arrest, con- and send to the doors of the pris- ne man, with an added expense least $350 per year as long as mains there. Efforts to take the en off the taxpayer have been by various schemes, most popula- f which has been selling of con- labor, in quanity, to contractors he results have been bad both for tate and the convicts.

w comes California with a new the result of study by state omists, prison wardens, welfare ers in the prisons, and the stud- of Penology. The law is now in t, with what appears to be good s to the state and to the con- The law provides that the state gh the California State Highway mission, shall employ on the con- tion of its highways all available cts, and shall pay them $2.50 a for every day they work. Pro- ed criminals, men convicted of laughter and of degrees of mur- hich do not carry capital pun- t, so that the men are held in entiaries are barred, but the pris- known as ordinary convict, who ps has committed his first and probably will "go straight" en the opportunity, is included workings of this plan.

law was drawn up by Julian H. of San Francisco, who has been ars a welfare worker for one of rgest Protestant churches in s of California. It is actively ted by some of the wardens and authorities and opposed by and so won the recognition of w state administration, headed rnor Friend W. Richardson. It med that for every 1500 con- o employed $1,000,000 will be every year to the tax payers. I with Mr. Alco, on the day e returned from the several of convicts, established under w plan, and while he talked, a zen men whom he had helped les from San Quentin and from , called on the telephone to The smiling little man, ap- y without a care in the world ssed years of his life behind walls as a volunteer worker behalf of men and women the state restrained, and out experience has come a law in- to prepare the convict for a life; to provide his depend- ith a livelihoood, and the pris- imself with strength to retain respect and his initiative.

idea grew out of the unfor- relationship between the state nvict," said Mr. Alco, disdaining himself any credit. "The act- t of sending a man to prison judges, attorneys, juries po- d transportation—ranges from to $5,000, a minimum average 000. California spent in the bien- period 1921-22, approximately 000 on transportation alone for ted men to penitentiaries. Fur- than this, it costs the state an ge of one dollar a day to keep in prison, that is, let us say, year, a low estimate. After ate has had a man in prison, ases him to start life all over with five dollars in cash, but no initiative, no resistance to al influences, no clothing and . When the law was passed the released convict five dollars um was equivalent to fifteen it will barely sustain him for ays. The new law provides that en are to be paid $2.50 a day hich they work. The money is to their credit with the prison which they come. From it is de- l the cost of their transporta- o the road camp in which they mployed; their food and their ng—for convicts in California wear stripped uniforms. Trans- ion is obtained at a reduced rate ood at cost with a slight addi- charge to cover handling and ration. Clothing shoes and to- , candy and other 'luxuries' are ied at cost. Sales of army cloth- nd shoes provide equipment for ng at costs far below those at the men could buy them were free. Good army shoes, for ex- e, have been supplied at fifty to seventy cents a pair, overalls ntr cents to thirty cents, and at correspondingly low prices.

men earn at least seventy cents a day. This sum is to their and on the day of their release, he amount paid to dependents, is to them. The men not only have money on which to live until they obtained work, but they are pro- with a knowledge of road build- as a basis to obtain a job. Fur- the state has arranged with building contractors to take into those men who are re- d with good records. Thus the provides the man with money and and in addition has preserved initiative and his self respect.

he work gets the man out of n and out of prison thought; it him away from instruction in , puts him amid clean, healthful roundings, and gives him the opportunity to 'come back' offered. To secure the future of nvict who has paid his so-called to society, employment must be ed for him. In most cases, the followed by the man previous to rest is closed. The workingman, horer, seldom goes to prison; it clerk the bookkeeper, the sales- the professional man who makes e larger part of our prison pop- on. These men cannot return to regular work, but they can be at new work, without expense to state of installing machinery penitentiaries, and without the coming into conflict with free or the organization of free la- le law forbids the 'letting out' e men to any contractor; they e employed only by the state, only on the road construction e man who has served time in a road camp has a job open in a free road camp when he is discharged, and needs no recommendation to get his job; the state's word is back of him.

The law was prepared after long conferences with the labor unions on the competition of convict labor with free labor, but the measure was so drawn that the laboring people are protected. Putting the men at work on state highways eliminate the necessity of employing the convicts within the penitentiary at occupations whose production comes under competition with free labor. The highways constructed by the state with convict labor are in remote sections. in the mountains, away from the centers of free labor. This preliminary work was done by Mr. Alco, before he obtained the approval of the governor. Guards are kept chiefly to maintain discipline, but they are being eliminated from the road work itself simply by increasing the reward for an escaped convict from fifty to two hundred dollars, and deducting that amount from the pay of all of the men in the camp when one escapes, knowing that the reward comes out of their own pockets; or, if a man escapes, strive to get him back, so that the reward so paid may be turned over to their camp. This plan has worked well.

"The convict has a drawing account to purchase such luxuriies as he may desire, but if after thirty days, his drawing account, including transportation, food, clothing and luxuries, exceeds the amount that he has earred, he is sent back to the prison whence he came. The convict himself handles no money, and aside from the payment of his transportation, clothing and food, his one obligatory expense is the payment to his dependents, if he has any, of a certain sum each month. Dependents resident in California for three years get certain aid from state and county, ranging from five to ten dollars per child each month When a convict has such dependents, if they are entitled to state aid, he must pay to them two thirds of his earnings. To those dependnts who are not eligible for state and county aid, the convict may send to two thirds of his net earnings if he so chooses, but this is not obligatory.

STRANGE AND CURIOUS.

Peculiarities That Will Astonish Almost Anyone.

Vern F. Smith, of Laporte, Ind., bet $5 he could marry a certain woman and he won.

A man arrested in Chicago has got to answer 261 charges against him, 233 being for burglary.

The memorial Methodist Church at Denver, Col., has boxing contests after services in the church have been held.

A woman in Lincolnn Neb., has sued her husband for divorce because he loves his dog better than he does her.

A baby that weighed only 12 ounces was recently born to Mrs. Anna Game of Chicago. He nicely fits into a cigar box.

One man, an Italian operates 40 a blind tiger in Pawnee, Neb., eat its places where liquor is sold in New York.

Booze, held in evidence, against ablind tiger in Pawnee, Neb., eats its way through the wooden barrel in which it was kept.

An Illinoise woman is a grandmother at 29. She married when she was 15, and her daughter was married at the age of 12.

Clyde Bowen, of Waycross. Ga., had his entire face cut off at a saw mill. He lived thirty hours but before he died he sang a song.

Mr. and Mrs. G. W. Willifred, of Enfield, N. C., have been married 51 years and they have four children. Not a death has ever occurred in the family.

Pasquale Stallone, of Old Forge, Pa., has got to spend 12 years in prison and afterwoods die in the electric chair. He killed two people.

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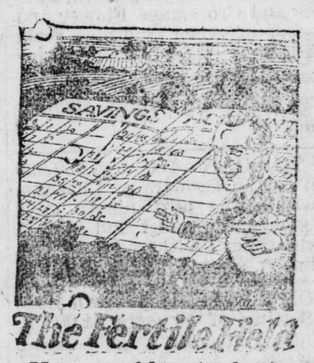

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